643 [57] When I asked what would happen if the Indians could not agree on any one person as cacique, my question seemed hardly to be understood. "We do agree; we are good; we do not fight." After such assertions, it was finally said that if some to'-esa', or several of them, resolutely demanded a different chief the teburu would appoint one for them (he would be called to'-epuru'), but their chief would be subordinate to the teburu. In fact no such case has arisen in recent times and there are no such subordinate chiefs at present.

645 It is, however, customary for the cacique to delegate some of his functions to a vice-cacique or sub-cacique, called teburu- (or tepuru-) ɛsi-yakon (the exact meaning of ɛsi is not clear to me, compare esa in to'-esa', but yakon is "his younger brother" and gives a sufficient clue to the sense of the phrase). This is not a fixed or generally recognized office, but merely one that may be constituted if the cacique desires. The teburu-ɛsi-yakon may, for instance, be sent on official errands to convey the wishes of the teburu or may represent [124] the latter in his absence. At present this function is fulfilled by Antonio Montesdeoca, nephew of Alejo Calcaño, who served as my interpreter during 645 most of this work. Although no such explicit statement was made, it is obvious 643 that Alejo has trained and is grooming Antonio as his successor, and it is agreed that the evident wishes of the old cacique in such a matter [illegible] heavily in [177] the selection of a new cacique. It was also stated that the wish for and the fact of growing contacts with the outer world make it desirable (Antonio says "necessary") to have a Spanish-speaking teburu, which at present automatically makes Antonio the only possible candidate, although Alejo is by no means an old man and his successor will probably not take office for many years, by which time the whole system may have collapsed if the present rate of change continues.

[756] The cacique is not a shaman, or piache, at present or usually (nor is the probable successor of the present cacique) and this is neither a requirement nor 756 a recommendation for this office. The piaches, of whom there are several, are specialists in their own field, having nothing to do with the government of [622] the tribe. Unlike so many Indian societies, the shaman is here entirely non-political and has no civil authority or influence beyond that entailed in the fact that he is ordinarily also a to'-esa'.

643 The cacique is respected and may be given first choice in the division of [181] benefits, but he receives no emolument in labor or in goods and in the thoroughly democratic, individualistic society he is merely another, although an out-[692] standing, individual. His duties are equally vague and light. He arbitrates what few interhousehold disputes occur, represents the tribe in contacts with others or with the Venezuelans, directs community undertakings and generally acts as the father of his people. We saw no instance when his orders were disobeyed and were told that none occur, but his orders are, in fact, hardly more than persuasive presentation of his wishes and opinions.

461 would trade his labor for goods for his family rather than for himself. Among
465 the Indians themselves the employment of labor is not uncommon and is paid
[479] either by labor in return or by goods, such as baskets or other common objects of trade. For instance one man may definitely employ another (outside his household — those in the household are of course obligated to help freely) to help erect his house and in return will do an equivalent amount of work for the man employed or will give him an equitable amount of food, drink, or articles of trade. This practice contains the germs of definite class differentiation into employees and laborers, but such differentiation has not at all occurred as yet.
[536] Generally speaking, there is no pronounced difference in wealth between different households and no one man is much more likely to be an employer than an employee.

Crime and Punishment.

173 According to present statements, the ancient penal code of the tribe, if
673 an indefinite and unwritten customary handling of the problem of crime can be
[681] so called, recognized basically only one crime, that of being hopelessly undesirable, and one punishment, death. Judgment as to the undesirability of a
[682] member of the tribe was based on the commission of antisocial actions, among
[685] which unjustified murder, violation of fishing rights, and habitual thievery
173 were specifically mentioned. A household might take matters into its own
692 hands, but this was considered undesirable and the regular, one might say the
643 truly legal, procedure was to lay the complaint before the cacique who judged
[627] its accuracy and gravity, but apparently without holding anything resembling
[696] a formal hearing or trial. If he condemned the criminal, he assigned the duty of executing him to any members of the tribe, such as the male complainants, and the sentence was carried out without further formality as soon as opportunity presented.

674 At present, the Indians say, crime is so nearly unknown that no regular
[681] system of punishment is required. It is easy to believe that serious crime is
[152] extremely rare as the amity of the Kamarakoto is amazing. Even when they
[273] were violently drunk no quarreling was seen, still less any attempts at physical injury. They are, however, human and it is incredible that no crime ever is
[178] committed. From answers to hypothetical questions as to what would be done if a crime should occur, it is evident that the old code is still considered natural and just and I have no doubt that it would be, and probably is, still applied if
685 occasion arises. Specifically, it was stated that unprovoked murder and serious
[682] violation of fishing rights merit death and that this should be administered un-
[696] der direction of the cacique but might well be undertaken by the injured house-
[627] hold on its own initiative. Theft, on the other hand, is now considered theoretically (and probably also in practice although no specific instance could be